

Chapter 1

Who Moved My Shrinkwrap?

In This Chapter

- ▶ Understanding Software as a Service
 - ▶ Paying for the service
 - ▶ Adding additional users
 - ▶ Basic MOL concepts
 - ▶ Getting Help when you need it
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Probably the most confusing thing about Office Live is the whole concept of what Office Live is — and isn't. You probably have a lot of questions, not only about how to use the software, but also what exactly the software does.

Office Live is both brand new software and a brand new technology. In this chapter, you find out about *Software as a Service* (SaaS) technology, who's paying for it, and how secure the system really is. You also find out a bit about a few of the underlying concepts of Office Live. Finally, you discover where to turn for help should the need arise.

Getting SaaSy with SaaS

It's important to know the correct terminology for discussing software — especially when attending cocktail parties and other social gatherings. If you look for Office Live at your local computer store you won't find it. That's because Office Live is not *software* in the traditional sense; there's no shrink-wrap to wrestle with and no CD to install. Office Live is a *service* — hence the name *Software as a Service*.

I can hear some of you saying, "Ah, got it. This is like AOL." The answer to that is a definitive "kind of." Services such as AOL allow you to connect to the Internet, surf the Web, and send some e-mail. Office Live on the other hand includes real live *applications* that you can use to increase your productivity in both your home and office life.

The other huge benefit of SaaS is that you can share your data with other people in other locations. For example, a Little League coach can share the team's schedule and roster with the rest of the team, or a project manager can assign tasks to other members of the company's project team.

A Rose Is a Rose Is an Office Live

If you have children, you know that one of the hardest things to do is to give them names. You can take the road frequently traveled and call them *Jennifer* and *Jason*. You can take the road less frequently traveled and call them *Apple* or *Dweezil*. You can even name a son — or in George Foreman's case *five* sons — after his father.

Apparently Microsoft had a similar struggle with naming its new baby. Office Live must have seemed like a great idea at the time but unfortunately it sounds alarmingly close to several other popular Microsoft products.



Do not confuse Office Live with the following:

- ✓ **Microsoft Office:** Office is a suite of software that contains goodies such as Word, Excel, and Outlook. Office Live is most definitely *not* an online version of Office.
- ✓ **Microsoft's Live Search engine:** Microsoft recently launched a new search engine found at www.live.com. Live has nothing to do with Office Live (other than the fact that they sound so darn similar!).
- ✓ **Office Online:** Microsoft has a Web site that allows you to find out all kinds of neat information about the Microsoft Office products. And to make matters even more confusing, it has a direct link to Office Live.

You'll probably never know for sure whether this naming overlap was intentional or simply an oversight by some befuddled project manager who will spend the rest of his days exiled in Siberia. However, don't be surprised if you frequently land in the wrong portion of cyberspace!

So what exactly is Microsoft Office Live?

Probably the hardest thing you'll have to do with Office Live is to explain exactly what it is. Microsoft Office Live provides your company with a free domain name, Web site, and e-mail accounts. Additionally, Office Live offers several business-management applications — for example, tools for managing customers, projects, and documents. Office Live throws in the capability to create an *intranet* where you and your closest friends or enemies can work together and share information online.

Office Live comes in three sizes — small, medium, and large — although Microsoft calls them Basics, Essentials, and Premium. The bigger the size, the more features you'll have.

Personally, I suggest you begin by explaining Office Live using very politically correct terminology. The following is an example:

- ✓ You might consider Office Live to be a *contact manager* because it allows you to keep track of all of your contacts.
- ✓ Office Live is a *scheduler* because it allows multiple people to access the same calendar.
- ✓ Office Live is a *service* because you can only use it while connected to the Internet.
- ✓ Office Live is an *application suite* because it includes several applications or programs that help you organize your business.
- ✓ Office Live is an *application developer* because it helps you develop and maintain a Web site.
- ✓ Office Live is a *hosting service* because it not only hosts your Web site, it also hosts documents and other information that can be shared by your multiple partners-in-crime.

If your friends continue to look at you rather blankly, at least you have established that your knowledge of computing is equal to — if not greater than — theirs. At that point, you may wish to start listing some of the wonderful features of Office Live.

What does Office Live do?

Although Office Live does not offer the Microsoft Office suite as a part of this online offering, it does offer many of the tools that a business needs — at a fraction of the price you'd usually pay for them. Besides allowing you to have more free time — which means you have more play time — Office Live delivers a nice little shopping list of features you might want to show your friends as you sit poolside sipping your margarita:

- ✓ A company domain name, hosts it for free, and helps you to market it.
- ✓ At least twenty-five company e-mail addresses so you can say good-bye to your unprofessional Hotmail, Google, Yahoo!, and AOL monikers.
- ✓ A password protected private Web site (an *intranet*) for sharing information with key contacts, and over 20 Internet-based applications that can help you automate common business tasks such as contacts, projects, and document management.

- ✓ Integrates with popular Microsoft products like Microsoft Office Outlook, Excel, and Word.
- ✓ Links to a free version of Office Accounting 2007, which allows you to set up an online shopping cart.
- ✓ Stores complete contact, account, and opportunity information including name, company, phone numbers, addresses, and e-mail addresses.
- ✓ Allows you to record histories about your contacts, accounts, and opportunities. This is particularly useful for those of us who suffer from Senior Moment Syndrome.
- ✓ Provides a calendar that you can view in a daily, weekly, or monthly format. You can view a personal or company calendar. You can customize it. And, most importantly, you can share it with your friends.
- ✓ Prints your information if you still rely on paper and pencil.
- ✓ Allows you to accomplish more in less time — which explains why I am able to find the time to sit around sipping margaritas!

Who Can Join the Party — and What Can They Take With Them?

Wrestling your best pair of shoes out of the mouth of a Doberman is nothing compared to wrestling company data from the hands of a CEO. Most successful companies have spent years building their contact list; the thought of losing it is not a very enticing one. One of the biggest hurdles Microsoft undoubtedly faces is the fact that confidential company information is now hanging out in the Internet for all the world to see. The CEO, CFO, or someone else with a lot of Cs in their title will worry that their information is subject to pilfering by their competitors. They'll worry about whether their data is being safely backed up. They'll worry that their employees will stumble into the areas that they shouldn't be accessing — such as the salaries of all their coworkers.



Microsoft has taken a lot of steps to ensure the privacy of your data — and to make sure that the CEOs sleep well at night.

Exactly how secure is secure?

Microsoft follows the Security Development Lifecycle (SDL) when developing software. This means that during each phase of Office Live's development process the SDL team sets about trying to break into the service from every possible angle. Then, before Office Live was released to the public at large, an independent development team analyzed it. The thinking is that software that

has undergone the SDL process is decidedly more secure than the software developed by the high school kid down the street.

Once the software is tested — and retested — your next concern might be about how easy it is to hack into your individual site. The data you store on Office Live is stored in computer systems located in controlled facilities. Additionally, Microsoft created an army of MPs, called the Microsoft Security Response Center (MSRC). MSRC's sole purpose in life is to protect Microsoft customers from vulnerabilities in Microsoft software. The MSRC don dark glasses and trench coats and snoop around looking for security leaks in Microsoft software. If the MSRC finds something that is suspect, they get all hot and bothered and moves in quickly to arrest all the bad guys. Okay, the bad guys aren't always arrested — but Microsoft is constantly searching for security leaks in much the same way that your antivirus software looks for new viruses.

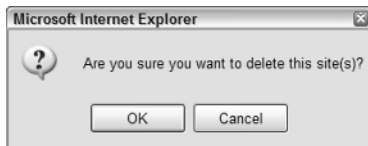
Crash — am I dead yet?

Want to see a CEO change colors? Tell him that the server just crashed and watch him go from red to white in sixty seconds; you might even see a few lovely shades of purple along the way. Microsoft uses *redundant* hardware and software systems to protect against system failures. Redundancy means that Microsoft uses more than one server on a Web site to perform the same party tricks. If one of the servers crashes, another server takes its place without missing a beat. Redundancy ensures that your Web site continues to function and your data continues to be safe and sound.

What happens if I hit the Delete button?

Accidents happen. Suppose you're showing your boss all the neat sites you've created in Office Live to house every last piece of critical company information. And that the boss decides he'd like to play with all that neat, critical, important information you've just spent days putting into Office Live. And *then* suppose that the boss wonders what will happen when he hits that pretty button with the red X that says *Delete*. When the message shown in Figure 1-1 appears, he gets bored, doesn't bother to read it, and clicks OK.

Figure 1-1:
Will this
really delete
my
database?



Not to worry. Microsoft maintains a backup copy of every Web site, all business applications and each and every shared site. It creates a daily backup copy of your data — so your backup data is one day old at most. A person with Administrator permission can restore the Web site or the business applications' data from the backup at any time, saving his or her delicate *derrière*.

Mama taught me to share

Just so you know: If you use Office Live in a standalone environment, you'll be the only one able to access your data. But getting your data to where it needs to go might make you so mobile that you'll seem like three people in one body as you scurry from one place to the next with your PDA in one hand and your laptop bag clenched in the other.

You'll probably find that because of the way Office Live allows you to run your business like a well-designed piece of machinery, you'll soon need to hire a couple of employees. My mother taught me that sharing is a good thing; obviously Office Live's mommy felt the same way, because you can share any information you want with the other people in your organization — or with your customers, for that matter. Of course, as your company expands, you might have some remote workers that you'd like to keep in touch with. Although smoke signals are kind of fun, you might prefer to have everybody (near or far) access your information online so the whole operation has the most up-to-date information.

Come on in, the water's fine

Whether you are expanding, or you already have a whole army of workers, you can share your information so everyone in your organization can view the same data. And you won't have to buy a fancy-schmancy server to do so.

Access to Office Live can — and should be — controlled by the administrator of the site. Administrators can grant access to users through specific levels of permission. The administrator can set up new users as a *Reader*, *Editor*, or *Administrator*:

- ✓ The Administrator has full access to your site. He can set up new users, decide which areas of Office Live users can access, and then access, add, modify, and delete any information that he wants.

- ✓ Editors have full access to the areas assigned to them by the Administrator; they can add, modify, and delete information.
- ✓ Readers (unfortunately) don't always read the instructions — so they have no more than read-only access to information to the areas assigned to them by the Administrator.

Synchronize your Office Live data to your software

I'm the first to admit that I am not a workaholic. I think my Type A personality combined with my intrinsic need to be lazy resulted in my love for Office Live. To me, the only thing worse than working is repeating the same work again a second time. Office Live very nicely synchronizes with several other popular software products allowing you to avoid the "that was so much fun let's do it again" syndrome.



If you are currently using Outlook or Outlook's Business Contact Manager, you can import your contacts directly from Outlook to Office Live. If you continue to use Outlook to schedule your appointments, you can synchronize your Outlook calendar with Office Live so you can view activities scheduled in Outlook from Office Live. If you want to see your Office Live activities in Outlook, that can also be arranged as well. You can even view your Office Live address book in Outlook, or your Outlook address book in Office Live.

For you accounting types out there, double-entry means some fancy thing you do with your accounting software. To the rest of us, double-entry sounds like double-work, and that does not sound like a good thing! By using Microsoft Accounting 2007 you can share your contact information among Office Live, the main computer in your office, and your accountant.

My PDA is Pretty Darn Amazing

Sometimes no one is around to share with so you just might want to share information with yourself. One way to do this is to purchase a Personal Digital Assistant (PDA) or a *smart phone* that is so smart that it combines the power of a cell phone with a PDA. Some of you might have already nicknamed your smart phones "My Life" because that is exactly what it contains. Office Live can synchronize with virtually any handheld device that uses the Windows Mobile operating system so that you can enter — or view — information from either your phone or from Office Live. See your address book! See your calendar! See your task list! See how easy it is to get a life.

What Are all These Darn Ads Doing Here?

It's pretty hard to escape advertising in this day and age. You see it on the sides of buses, before the coming attractions at the movies, and even hanging from an airplane as you sit watching a sporting event. Someone is paying big time for all those advertisements, so you'd think they're at least marginally effective.

You don't pay a fee to use an Office Live Basics account. So how can Microsoft pay for your domain register, host your Web site, and allow you to create 25 e-mail addresses for free? Easy. Microsoft places advertisements on your site that you see each and every time you log on to it.

The good news is that even though you see ads from your site when you log on to it, any visitors to your Web site are not subjected to advertising. They do, however, know that Microsoft is hosting your Web site; Microsoft adds a small Office Live logo to the bottom-right corner of your site.

You can bid those pesky ads adieu by subscribing to a fee-based account (Essentials or Premium). Apparently, however, Microsoft doesn't consider ads touting other Microsoft products to *be* advertisements because you're still treated to a bit of up-selling even after you upgrade to a fee-based account.

Terms You Need to Know

There's a toss-up as to who uses more acronyms and special naming conventions: an IT department or our Federal government. Now you might want to become a bit more proficient in MOL (Microsoft Office Live)-ese.



Here are a few terms you need to know when using Office Live:

- ✓ **Site:** This is the main area where you store your data. Depending on the version of Office Live that you use, you can create multiple sites to divide your business into separate areas. For example, you can create sites for a specific project, vendor, customer, or employee. Sites allow you to control which people have access to its content. You'll also create a Web site, which is open to the public.
- ✓ **Templates:** Templates are predesigned forms for those of you who are hesitant to design your sites from scratch.

- ✓ **Dashboard:** In much the same way the dashboard on your car gives you a bird's-eye view of how your car is running, Office Live's shows you the various facets of your business in one central location.
- ✓ **Web part:** You can customize dashboards to provide you with the information that you specifically want to see. A *Web part* is one of those sections of information.
- ✓ **List:** A *list* is a collection of data arranged in columns and rows. Typically you enter your data into a form; after you've input it, you can view it in list format — and even determine which pieces of data you'd like to see. For example, once you start adding contacts to Office Live, you might want to see their phone numbers and mailing addresses — and then arrange them alphabetically by their company names.
- ✓ **Applications:** The fee-based versions of Office Live provide you with a bunch of business applications that help you with everything from contact management, sales, and marketing to such daily concerns as employees, timesheets, and company asset management.

Help Me, Rhonda! (Getting Support)

No matter how easy a piece of software is to use, you're bound to have a question from time to time. Of course, this book answers the majority of those — but should you run into problems, you have several places to turn for additional support.

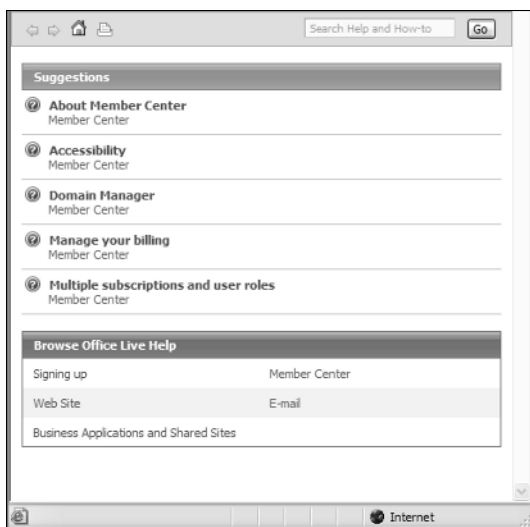
All users of Office Live can access help via e-mail, through an interactive chat session with one of the Microsoft support staff or through a public support forum. Only users with a paid subscription can access phone support; you'll have access to a 24/7 toll-free phone number that you can use and abuse until you find the answers to your questions.

Good help is hard to find and nowhere does that adage hold truer than in Office Live. You'll find the link to the public forum on your home page. You can find the various support options by clicking the help button at the top-right corner of Office Live and typing **Tech Support** in the search box. You're prompted to indicate the type of plan you have, and then you finally get to the support options.

Office Live offers several great areas for you to explore:

- ✓ The Help button is located in the upper-right corner of the Member Center page. You can search for the answers to your most earth-shattering questions. Figure 1-2 shows what the Office Live Help looks like.

Figure 1-2:
Office Live's
Help
window.



- ✓ You'll find a few of the commonly used Learning Center lessons prominently displayed on the right side of the Member Center page. These are designed to get you up and running on Office Live in a jiffy.
- ✓ The Learning Center link, located on the Navigation bar of the Member Center page, takes you to the whole series of Learning Center articles (see Figure 1-3). These articles help you to become an Office Live power user.

Figure 1-3:
Exploring
Office Live's
Learning
Center.

